



Hanae Mori Target Dress, ca.1970.  
Ryerson FRC2009.03.001AB.  
Donated by Jocelyn Ryles.

# HANAE MORI VELVET SHIFT DRESS

**By Dr. Ingrid Mida  
and Kimberly Leckey**

May 16, 2014

This Hanae Mori shift dress with stand collar, short sleeves and belt is made out of velvet and is fully lined in black polyester satin. The design on the front of the dress is an abstracted pink and red circular target pattern. The design on the back of the dress is an abstracted motif of black and gray. One sleeve is in black velvet and the other sleeve is a repeat of the target pattern. The dress closes with a back metal zipper and two hooks and eyes at the collar. This Hanae Mori velvet shift dress with belt (FRC2009.03.001 A+B) was donated to the Ryerson Fashion Research Collection in 2009 by Jocelyn Ryles. No other provenance information was obtained at the time of donation.

The following description and analysis was written by Ryerson School of Fashion student Kimberly Leckey and was revised and edited by Collection Coordinator Ingrid Mida. It should be noted that Kimberly Leckey's interpretation of this dress represents only one of many possibilities. This dress might also be used to consider a range of topics in a scholarly approach to fashion research including: the design practices of Hanae Mori over her career, the nature of Japanese designers on western fashion, or perhaps the psychology reflected in the styles and silhouettes of 1970s fashions for women.



Hanae Mori  
Target Dress,  
ca.1970. Ryerson  
FRC2009.03.001AB.  
Back view. Donated by  
Jocelyn Ryles.

## DESCRIPTION

The dress is sewn together with black polyester thread and the inside seams are cut in a scalloped design which stops 9" down on the side seams. The edges are hand-finished in a blanket stitch. The shoulder seams include a 1/4" bra clip. As well, the binding on the dress zipper facing, armholes and hem is a Hanae Mori signature diagonal repeating print.

Outside measurements include: top of back neckline to hem- 39 1/4"; top of front neckline to hem- 38 1/4"; sleeve- 8" long; collar- 1 1/4" wide; side seams- 31"; shoulder- 3 7/8"; front bust dart- 5 1/4" long, 3" down from armhole; back neck dart-2" long, 2 1/4" from center back; YKK zipper opening- 19", 1/8" teeth. Inside measurements include: hem- 2"; inside seam allowance- 3/4"; sleeve hem- 1 3/4" including twill tape; armhole seam allowance- 3/8" binding.

The accessory which comes with the dress is a belt (FRC2009.03.001B) that is made of the same velvet as the dress and is 70 1/2" long and 1 3/4" wide, with three gold rings with a diameter of 1 1/4". The rings are spaced unevenly along the length of the belt.

Hanae Mori Target  
Dress, ca.1970. Ryerson  
FRC2009.03.001AB.  
Shoulder detail. Donated  
by Jocelyn Ryles.



Ryerson University  
Fashion Research Collection

---

## REFLECTION

The fabrication, the length of the dress and short sleeves suggest that this dress might have been ideal for an in-between season such as fall or spring in Toronto.

The dress was worn multiple times due to the wear evident on the inside underarm seam (where someone would apply deodorant which would then rub off on that particular spot) as well as the condition of the zipper that was once black but now exposes some of the silver finish underneath. This suggests that this dress was worn often.

The belt might be worn more loosely across the hips due to the fact that no side seam strings are present or seem to have previously been attached for the purpose of being held in place. It is also important to note that the three rings are dispersed unevenly which is curious. One reason for this might be for the adjustment of different lengths of excess belt which hangs when attached. Another might be for different uses of the belt, perhaps as a hair tie used around the head which would use the closest ring which then wraps around again and ties into the second or third ring.

My emotional response to this dress is one of delight to the pattern and colours and one of curiosity to the abstractness of the shapes and the use of the accessory.



Hanae Mori  
Target Dress,  
ca.1970. Ryerson  
FRC2009.03.001AB.  
Belt view. Donated by  
Jocelyn Ryles.

#### **SPECULATION**

I speculate is that this dress was owned and worn by a young woman in her mid-20s to late 30s who could afford a Parisian couture label like Hanae Mori and was young and spirited enough to pull off the loud abstract pattern of the velvet shift dress. The size and silhouette of the dress indicate that she had a slim figure. The dress is not worn out, however the amount of wear suggests that it was often in rotation within her wardrobe. Her style was very on trend for the 1970s suggesting that she was expressive in how she dressed and was possibly involved in influential groups in the art or fashion world. She liked clothing she could wear in her own way and accessorize to create a full look and the accessory with the dress that could be worn multiple ways does just this. The Hanae Mori dress could have been worn out for drinks with friends, dancing, walking the streets of Toronto, or for a friend's house party. The wearer of this piece had bold style and a taste for expensive clothing that allowed her to express her individuality.

### **CURATOR'S NOTES BY INGRID MIDA**

This dress is one of three garments in the Ryerson Fashion Research Collection by Hanae Mori. The other two garments include:

FRC2006.01.050 A silk chemise dress with 3/4 sleeves, in an abstracted pattern of black, gold, red, rust orange, purple, blue and black diagonal stripes. c.1980-1985.

FRC2012.03.001A+B+C Black cotton shell print skirt with alternate tops. A. Halter top with peplum waist and side boning. Ribbon ties and back button closures with loops. B. Alternate top with shoulder pads, puffed elbow length sleeves, piping on sleeve and around armholes and back button closures. C. Circle skirt, c.1989. Purchased at Creeds in Toronto.

All three garments are illustrative of the fine workmanship associated with the Hanae Mori label. The two dresses are both boldly coloured with vibrant abstracted designs that are signatures of the label. The target dress and the shell skirt with alternate tops are designed to give the wearer choice as to how to wear the pieces, indicating that Mori wanted to offer her wearer versatility and choice. Although all three garments have Hanae Mori labels, the text and design of the labels are different, offering the opportunity to research the dating and origins of the garments.

Hanae Mori (b.1926) was born in Japan and presented in New York for the first time in 1965 with her "East meets West" collection and began showing in Paris in 1977. Committed to craftsmanship by hand, she was one of the first Asian designers to be accepted into the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne in the late 1970s. Her signature print was a butterfly, and the bright patterns and bold hues of her chic clothes appealed to strong, independent women. After Hanae Mori's last collection in 2004, journalist Suzy Menkes wrote: "The mix of colour, pattern, and embellishment, but always with a controlled and elegant silhouette, proved how much the name Hanae Mori will be missed in the world of haute couture".

### **References**

Menkes, Suzy. "Hanae Mori: A Butterfly Good-bye". *The New York Times*, July 9, 2004.

Mori, Hanae. *Hanae Mori Style*. New York: Kodansha International, 2001.

Vogue.com. *Hanae Mori*. Retrieved from: [http://www.vogue.com/voguepedia/Hanae\\_Mori](http://www.vogue.com/voguepedia/Hanae_Mori)